Derailment of Chittorgarh Mhow Holiday Express

621. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chittorgarh Mhow Holiday Express derailed near Ratlam on the 6th June, 2005;

(b) if so, the number of persons who lost their lives and were seriously injured as a result of the accident;

(c) whether an inquiry has been held into the cause of derailment, if so, the findings thereof and the action taken thereon; and

(d) the amount of ex-gratia payment made in relation to those who died and were seriously injured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 2 persons lost their lives, 8 persons were grievously injured and 10 persons sustained simple injuries.

(c) The Commissioner of Railway Safety/Western Circle is conducting statutory inquiry into the accident and has submitted his preliminary report. As per the provisional findings, more investigation are required to be done before arriving at the most probable cause of the derailment. Action has been initiated on the immediate recommendation made.

(d) Rs. 30,000/- to kith & kin of 2 deceased persons and Rs. 45,000/- to 18 persons who sustained grievous and simple injuries has been paid as *ex-gratia*.

Relief to passengers of Shanti Express

622. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for over 36 hours no relief was provided by the Railways to the passengers of the ill-fated Shanti Express which was stranded at Dakor during the recent floods in June in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons for this inaction for 36 hours on the part of Railways or their lack of co-ordination with the Gujarat Administration who took over 28 hours for dropping food packets (most of which fell into the water) for the marooned passengers; and

(c) whether Government are thinking of devising a contingency plan for such a situation in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. On 30.06.2005, 9310 Shanti Express reached Dakor station at 10.13 hours. Thereafter, Western Railway had immediately swung into action at the Divisional levels by hiring State buses and started evacuating the stranded passengers and shifted 156 passengers to Ahmedabad between 1430 hours & 1600 hours. Further rescue work had to be suspended as floods had affected the road network. As regards provision of relief to the passengers, the refreshment stall at Dakor station was replenished continuously with milk and snacks. Railway authorities remained in constant touch with State and District authorities for providing assistance. The Armed Forces were also asked for air dropping of relief materials which could be possible only in the afternoon of 01.07.2005 due to inclement weather in morning hours. Two trips of helicopter dropped 4 tonnes of relief materials in 400 gunny bags on the cover shed of Dakor station between 1300 hours & 1330 hours on 01.07.2005.

In the evening of 01.07.2005 when the water level started receding, the passengers were shifted to various guest houses and by 1230 hours on 02.07.2005, 230 passengers were shifted to nearby Dharmashalas/ Guest houses/School. Food was provided to them with the help of State authorities. Again on 02.07.2005 between 1230-1300 hours helicopter dropped 2 tonnes of relief material consisting of food packets, fruits, biscuits, namkeen packet and drinking water. Further, a special train with 500 food packets, 200 packets of biscuits, 20 kilogram fruits, 700 pouches of water and 2 creates of mineral water for the passengers were also sent from Vadodara at 1840 hours on 02.07.2005.

Finally, a special train left Dakor at 2358 hours on 02.07.2005 with 220 passengers for Godhra. 10 passengers left by their own means. From Godhra all the passengers were sent to Ahmedabad by buses on 03.07.2005.

(c) Disaster Management Plans of the Railways provide for such contingencies.

Rail projects in UP, Maharashtra and Uttaranchal

†623. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the ongoing rail projects in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttaranchal and the amount so far spent on these projects;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.